

# THE AMERICAN **Legion**

*www.legion.org*  
\$2.50 FEBRUARY 2020 *The magazine for a strong America*

## **ALLIANCES**

THE BURDENS AND BENEFITS

*The little-known story  
of Dr. Joseph Ward*

MYSTERIES OF THE MIND, PART II

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY SINCE 1919







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# Legion

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#### SACRIFICE AT SEA

Life vests and folded flags are placed in memory of the Four Chaplains for a memorial service at American Legion Post 974 in Franklin Park, Ill. Every year, Legionnaires lead their communities in remembering the selfless courage of four Army chaplains who gave up their life jackets to save others when USAT *Dorchester* was hit by a torpedo in the North Atlantic on Feb. 3, 1943. *Photo by Clay Lomneth*

*The American Legion Magazine*, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its nearly 2 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.



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Photo by Schelly Stone

## 'We Can Do It'

I would like to thank Ken Olsen for the heartfelt article about the West Los Angeles VA property mismanagement and its disregard in helping our homeless veterans (December). More people need to be educated about this tragic situation.

— Kerri L. Holm-Eberling, Greenfield, Minn.

## On civil discourse

I was pleased to receive in my email the Veterans Day video “A Call for Civil Discourse for Veterans.” As leaders and respected members of our communities, veterans have an opportunity and responsibility to bring our nation back to civil and productive conversations.

That’s why I was dismayed to read in Vet Voice (December) a published comment stating that “Democrats will bicker and stall while our troops are in harm’s way.” Let’s set an example for civil discourse in our own conversations, and hold all our fellow veterans responsible for this task at hand.

— Jan Kennedy, Lithopolis, Ohio

## 'A Mission to Save Lives'

Regarding the December Commander’s Message: the death of any veteran by suicide is heartbreaking, but it is not wise to use and reuse statistically misleading and false information to gain support for veterans while

making veterans in general appear a helpless and troubled group when the opposite is true.

In my volunteer work at VA medical centers in Michigan and Florida, I have had many discussions with fellow veterans concerning their embarrassment and concern about being seen as incapable buffoons needing to be led by the hand through life. This column does nothing to change that perception, particularly for combat-hardened and wounded vets like me. In reality, the majority of veteran suicides are carried out by vets who never experienced combat and/or have never been deployed to a combat zone.

I do agree with your premise of reaching out to veterans in need of assistance; however, the words and actions of well-meaning but misinformed groups and individuals only increases public-perception damage to veterans in general, in my opinion.

— Pete Van Til, Hudsonville, Mich.



### Raising the minimum wage

I do not agree with Rep. Mike Johnson about not raising the minimum wage (Big Issues, December). What members of Congress do not take into account is how much more is deducted from people's paychecks today. In 1964, when I was 19, there were only a low federal tax and FICA, and FICA stopped after \$4,600 was earned.

– Robert McGuigan, Westland, Mich.

Rep. Andy Levin says that raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour would at least be enough for hardworking Americans to provide for themselves and their families. That means they would receive \$600 a week. That would be \$31,200 per year, putting them over the poverty floor of \$25,750. What he doesn't say is that businesses will scale back on these jobs, as evidenced by McDonald's and other minimum-wage payers putting in kiosks so you can order your food and bypass a laid-off cashier.

When people get a raise in the minimum wage, the nation's small businesses must raise their prices because they cannot absorb it. Thus that \$15 per hour job has to pay more for what they want. Did they gain?

– Steve Gallant, Auburn, Mass.

Rep. Mike Johnson's reasons for not raising the federal minimum wage are absolutely true, and if one would do some research on the matter, they would see how politics are the only reason for raising it.

– Charles Busbey, Dripping Springs, Texas

To date, I have not heard anyone mention the possibility that the main benefactor of higher wages might be the government in collecting higher taxes. I saw a piece about a worker who consistently turned down a promotion and a higher wage because as a single father he would lose such benefits as child care, which even with the higher wage he would not be able to afford.

– Warren Abrams, Milner, Ga.

### Buskirk 'great Legionnaire'

The December issue has a nice piece on our friend George Buskirk (Rapid Fire). However, it alludes to his appointment as national treasurer in 1988. I believe that was 1998.

– American Legion Past National Commander (1999-2000) Al Lance, Culpeper, Va.

### Pearl Harbor remembered

I enjoyed the short article about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (Rapid Fire, December). But as much as you can train, or be prepared, fate is one thing no one can control. A month prior to the attack, USS *Arizona* was damaged during fleet maneuvers just before it was to head to San Francisco to be outfitted with radar and other modern equipment. *Arizona* remained for the repairs needed to go back to the States and was not supposed to be at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7.

In all, 2,403 sailors, Marines, soldiers and Hawaiian civilians lost their lives on that day. Had *Arizona* been in San Francisco, there would have been 1,177

fewer casualties. Luckily, our carriers were not there; had they been in port, the war in the Pacific could have lasted until almost 1950, and I doubt our first offensive would have been in Europe.

Husband Kimmel, commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at the time of the attack, was blamed for the loss of men and ships, but was not given credit for sending the carriers and faster warships to go out and look for a Japanese task force they felt was headed somewhere.

As my dad, a World War II Navy veteran, once said, "The biggest word in the English language is *if*."

– Terry A. Paggi, Mokena, Ill.

### 'Not the End of History'

I was outraged when I read Alan Dowd's article about Germany (November). Having been born in Scotland and lived there during the war, and having experienced the visits of the Luftwaffe during the Clydebank Blitz, what was done for Germany after the war makes my blood boil. I had relatives serving in the British army who would bring food parcels when they came home on leave; we were still on rationing until 1950, and we were supposed to be on the winning side. How many good men died during the Berlin Airlift?

That's another point: we should never have allowed the Berlin Wall to be built. The way I see it, the big mistake we made was using the second A-bomb on Nagasaki.

– Gilbert Hunter, East Longmeadow, Mass.

### THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS

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# An investment in our future

Veterans and children. They occupy a cherished place in society – those who defended our nation and those who will inherit the benefits of that sacrifice, if given a fair chance. They also comprise two of the four pillars upon which The American Legion was founded.

Our dedication to these two constituencies is what excites me most about the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation. Established through a resolution passed by our National Executive Committee in 2018, the foundation provides essential funding for two core areas of American Legion service and advocacy.

First is our Department Service Officer School (DSO) program. The American Legion has more than 3,000 accredited service officers who assist U.S. veterans worldwide in obtaining their earned benefits, free of charge, regardless of membership status in The American Legion. The fruits of their labor can be nothing short of life-changing. For instance, Army veteran Alvin Cousin injured his back and legs while serving on active duty during the Korean War. Cousin, a member of McKinney-King American Legion Post 142 in Hartford, Conn., filed for benefits and battled the federal government for decades. But it wasn't until 2011 that he decided to allow Connecticut service officer K. Robert Lewis to assist his case.

In 2017, Cousin was granted a 40 percent disability rating by VA, retroactive for two years. But it gets better. Lewis and Cousin's attorney Andrew Dufresne kept fighting for a more just outcome. After being denied appeals by the Regional Office, the Board of Veterans Appeals and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the federal circuit finally heard Cousin's case. On Sept. 20, 2019, his claim was granted retroactively, to 1953. The 90-year-old veteran will be financially secure for the rest of his life thanks, in no small part, to the persistence, training and experience of an American Legion department service officer.

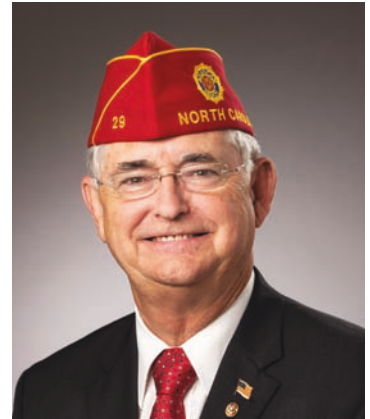
Now, to the other part of the equation: children. The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program was established in 1925 to help meet the basic needs of veterans and military personnel with minor children at home when no other resources are available.

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Any gift is an investment in our future, and a tribute to those who made it happen.

*James W. "Bill" Oxford*



National Commander  
James W. "Bill" Oxford

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**American Legion National Commander Bill Oxford**, following a Nov. 7 gathering at the White House, where President Trump signed bipartisan legislation requiring certain federal properties to display the POW/MIA flag every day



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VA hearing presentations prepared on behalf of veterans by national American Legion benefits-claims experts in November



**13**

Applications for corrections submitted by The American Legion in November on behalf of veterans seeking reconsideration of their military discharge characterizations

**6,560**

Minimum number of Veterans Day events coordinated by American Legion posts in 2018, with 69 percent reporting



**\$7,000**

Value of donated goods for veterans, including gift cards, coats and quilts, delivered for the holidays to the Charleston, S.C., VA Medical Center by American Legion Post 178 in Murrells Inlet – the 14th consecutive year the post has made such a delivery

## SERVING YOUTH

**25**

Minor children assisted throughout the country in November by The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance program, which provides grants for needy military and veteran families to pay for shelter, utilities, food and clothing

**\$26,850**

Amount in American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grants distributed in November to assist organizations and programs that help children facing difficulties beyond their control

**10**

American Legion district revitalization events conducted in five departments in November



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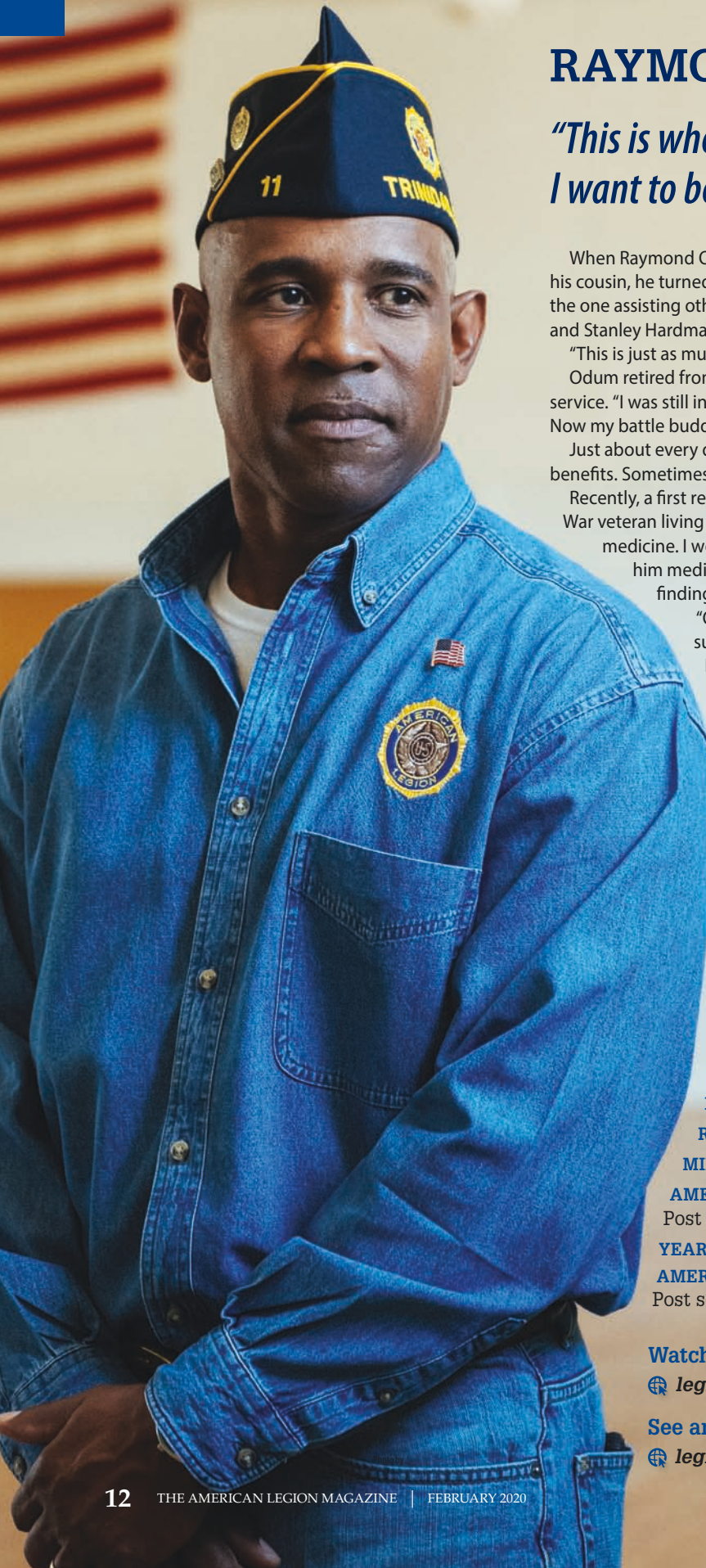
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## RAYMOND ODUM

*"This is where I want to be.  
I want to be part of this team."*

When Raymond Odum needed help with military funeral honors for his cousin, he turned to a local American Legion post. These days, he's the one assisting others, as veterans service officer for Las Animas County and Stanley Hardman Post 11 in Trinidad, Colo.

"This is just as much serving as when I was active, and I love it," he says.

Odum retired from the Army in 2010, but he wasn't ready to leave the service. "I was still in that mode of going out there with my battle buddy. Now my battle buddies are here."

Just about every day, he helps veterans young and old access their benefits. Sometimes more than that.

Recently, a first responder contacted Odum about a homeless Vietnam War veteran living near the local fairgrounds. "He was sick, out of medicine. I worked with the Department of Human Services to get him medicine and into a homeless shelter. He ended up finding a job and called to thank me.

"Our goal is to help you move on. We want you to be successful. That's the thing about The American Legion: we are a family and community."

The greatest need of veterans who contact Odum is health care – getting them enrolled in VA and on their way to better health, physically and mentally.

"We really have to get that mental thing down," he says. "How can we get those veterans help so they can be successful? That's how we were trained (in the military). You never quit. As long as I'm here, I'm going to help veterans who are in need. When they know somebody cares, they're willing to receive that help."

For Odum, every success story is thanks enough: "'Ray, I got into the system.' 'Ray, they're taking care of my heart problem.' Those are benefits they earned by serving, and that's what makes me so happy about doing this job."

– Cameron Richardson

**BRANCH OF SERVICE** Army (1990-2010)

**RANK** Sergeant first class

**MILITARY JOB** Combat engineer

**AMERICAN LEGION POST** Stanley Hardman Post 11, Trinidad, Colo.

**YEARS IN THE AMERICAN LEGION** 3

**AMERICAN LEGION ACTIVITIES** Post service officer (2018-present)

**Watch an interview of Raymond Odum online:**

[legion.org/magazine](https://www.legion.org/magazine)

**See an archive of past interviews:**

[legion.org/iamlegion](https://www.legion.org/iamlegion)

Photo by Nick Cote



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# Government controls on drug prices



## SUPPORT

### Rep. Frank Pallone, D-N.J.

■ Pallone is chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Americans are subsidizing prescription drugs for the rest of the world, paying three, four or 10 times more than people in other countries for the exact same drugs. Why? Because, unlike the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the federal government cannot negotiate lower prescription drug prices for Medicare beneficiaries or other Americans.

This is simply not fair, but will change if H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, becomes law. I introduced this bill last September to provide significant relief to the millions of Americans struggling to afford their medications.

This legislation would empower the federal government to negotiate lower drug prices for Americans, penalize companies for unjustified price hikes above the rate of inflation and cap Medicare Part D beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs at \$2,000 per year.

Drug negotiation would save seniors, American families and taxpayers money. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) initial analysis of this legislation, the cost savings to Medicare Part D alone would save taxpayers \$345 billion over the next 10 years. We can use these savings to reinvest in the search for new cures and treatments, as well as improvements in other health-care programs. The CBO estimates that drug prices will be reduced by 55 percent in the first year.

This is a common-sense approach that should not and cannot be partisan. Even President Trump has expressed support for drug negotiation, saying "we are going to negotiate like crazy." This bill would make that possible.

It's time to join together so we can level the playing field with the rest of the world.



## OPPOSE

### Rep. Michael C. Burgess, R-Texas

■ Burgess is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Imagine bipartisan legislation that could be passed in Congress and signed by the president. A tough concept by today's standards.

Republicans and Democrats agree that the nation's prescription drug prices are too high. In fact, last year the Energy and Commerce and the Ways and Means committees requested information about capping out-of-pocket costs in Medicare Part D. The Senate Finance Committee also worked to reform Part D. If

members of Congress were committed to work together in a bipartisan, bicameral manner on restructuring Medicare Part D, the president would sign that legislation and Americans would see lower drug costs.

Unfortunately, that is not the case for H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act. The bill should have gone through regular order and been given time for a quality committee assessment, including a real score from the Congressional Budget Office. The commitment from Health Subcommittee Chairwoman Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Calif., to have a subcommittee markup should have been respected.

Furthermore, the claim that this legislation will "lower drug prices through fair drug price negotiation" is completely misleading. On the contrary, it would hold drug manufacturers hostage unless they agree with the government-set price. Congress should build on the success of the 21st Century Cures Act and its other work to clear this regulatory bottleneck and speed up the drug approval process.

Together we could have capped out-of-pocket costs in Part D, improved drug price transparency and improved on bipartisan legislation. Instead, Congress is wasting its time on legislation that will not become law.

## THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

*A drug pricing bill would empower the federal government to negotiate lower drug prices. Critics say the bill fails to eliminate unnecessary regulations and speed up drug approval.*

## CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

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# The ABCs of ZZZs

BY LANCE FRAZER

Media Bakery

One in every three Americans doesn't get enough sleep on a regular basis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Insufficient or poor sleep can lead to increased risk of auto accidents, poor performance at work and in the classroom, and more.

Researchers are learning how a lack of quality sleep affects the human body in other ways, too.

Alon Avidan, director of the UCLA Sleep Disorders Center, calls it an epidemic, noting that six or fewer hours can put a person at risk for numerous health problems, including diabetes, elevated blood pressure, arrhythmia and other cardiac issues. Obesity, too; lack of sleep produces hormones that stimulate the appetite, and it doesn't take much. Then there's the one-hour shift to daylight saving time, which doubles the rate of single-vehicle accidents.

During sleep, our bodies get rid of toxins in our system, which includes the brain. Get too little sleep, and those toxins build up. And it's not enough just to tick off a certain number of sleep hours. If you get seven to eight hours but your sleep is fragmented, you aren't spending enough time in the deeper stages of sleep your body needs, and you

can't just make up for it the next night.

"While your body can rejuvenate and restore its systems, it takes seven to eight

hours of good sleep to make up for every hour of sleep lost," Avidan says.

A study by researchers at UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine and Tel Aviv University found that insufficient or low-quality sleep robs the neurons in the brain of the ability to function properly, affecting the way we perceive and react to the world around us. Another study indicated that sleep deprivation may affect the body's ability to heal wounds, and a third indicated that sleep deprivation can be a contributing factor to depression.

The best approach is to work on the way you get ready to sleep, Avidan says. Often people will read, watch TV, text or work on the computer until they go to bed, but it's better to focus on getting disengaged from the patterns that keep the brain engaged, he says.


"Sleep is not negotiable. Your body and your mind cannot get by with less. If you wake up and still continue to feel sleepy, if you find it's impacting the quality of your life, see your physician."

*Lance Frazer is a California-based freelance writer specializing in health and medicine, science, nature and the environment.*

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

## RESOURCES

National Sleep Foundation:  [sleepfoundation.org](https://www.sleepfoundation.org)

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (part of the National Institute of Health):  [nhlbi.nih.gov](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

UCLA Sleep Center:  [sleepcenter.ucla.edu](https://sleepcenter.ucla.edu)



# Treating your COPD and still struggling?

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**We change lives. We help people breathe better.**

1. Methodology: Phone surveys at regular intervals with COPD patients using the InCourage system, as part of a subset of the overall RespirTech bronchiectasis outcomes registry. Data collection began in 2013. As of 11/31/18, 154 patients completed the baseline survey; 108 patients in 1-month cohort; 89 in 3-month cohort; 70 in 6-month cohort; 43 in 12-month cohort.





# What to know about CBD

BY BRIAN WALLHEIMER

Media Bakery

Lately, we're hearing cannabidiol – known as CBD – suggested as the answer to everything from anxiety and sleeplessness to aches and pain. It's sold as an oil and a lotion, in foods like gummy bears and drinks, and added to bath bombs, dog treats and other products.

In an interview with *The American Legion Magazine*, cannabis expert Peter Grinspoon, a primary care physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and an instructor at Harvard Medical School, cuts through the hype.

He says it's important to distinguish between CBD and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the compound in marijuana that has an intoxicating effect. CBD is found in cannabis plants but doesn't produce a high. "Hemp has CBD in it, and CBD is nonintoxicating and nonaddictive. It's one of hundreds of chemical compounds in cannabis."

## How can CBD help a person?

There is some early data that show CBD helps in terms of performance anxiety and public speaking. People also think it helps with sleep, anxiety and pain. It has potential for treating addiction. It has potential as an antimicrobial. It's been approved by the FDA for pediatric epilepsy syndromes.

It also seems to have potential as an adjunct to other treatment regimens for cancer. People with a type of brain tumor called glioblastoma live longer if CBD is part of the regimen, based on some preliminary data.

We're just discovering the potential, so it's exciting, but it does seem like people are sort of

exploiting the hopes people have for CBD. People are making CBD pillowcases and workout clothes and hamburgers. Hopefully we can navigate a middle path between harnessing the potential of CBD and not having people be exploited.

## Does CBD have potential for treating PTSD?

There's some evidence of benefit of CBD for PTSD in early case studies, but it hasn't been definitively proven. In a small research study patients showed a decrease in PTSD severity, the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* reported. Patients also received routine psychiatric care during the eight-week trial. The report says CBD was "generally well tolerated, and no patients discontinued treatment due to side effects," adding that more thorough clinical trials are necessary.

## Does it matter how you take CBD?

We're not recommending vaping because of vape-related illnesses. But people can take gummy bears, use the oils or the creams, whatever they find most effective.

The doses people use tend to be lower than the doses in studies. In animal studies, they were usually using 20 to 30 milligrams per kilogram. The gummy bears tend to be 30 milligrams. If you're talking about 30 milligrams per kilogram, a human being is like 70 kilograms. So the doses people take are very small, much smaller than the doses shown to work in animals.

See **CBD** on page 20

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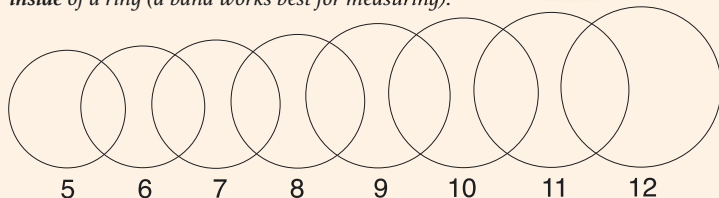
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## Got prebiotics?

We've all heard about probiotics, the "good" gut bacteria found in supplements, yogurt and other fermented foods, including kimchi and kombucha.

Say hello to "prebiotics," compounds that feed the friendly bacteria in the gut. According to Marisa Moore, a registered dietitian nutritionist with *U.S. News & World Report*, prebiotics are largely fermentable carbohydrates that "help nourish gut bacteria so they can better thrive."

Prebiotics are linked to reduced inflammation, can boost immunity, and may also have a positive effect on blood cholesterol and triglycerides, and mental health, Moore adds. Prebiotics are found in honey, bananas, carrots,

radishes, onions, garlic, soybeans, asparagus, certain greens, certain artichokes and some cereals.

Hannah Holscher, assistant professor of nutrition at the University of Illinois, says, "When I think about prebiotics, I remember the 'e' for the energy they provide for gut bacteria. And for probiotics, I think of the 'o' for organism in the gut microbiome."



## Man's best friend

A study published in *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* suggests that having a dog is beneficial to heart attack and stroke survivors who live alone.

The research team observed Swedes ages 40 to 85 who suffered a heart attack or stroke between 2001 and 2012, and found that people who suffered heart attacks and lived alone were 33 percent less likely to die after being released from the hospital if they owned dogs. Stroke victims who owned dogs saw a 27 percent lower risk of death.

The study's authors surmise that the lower risk of death associated with dog ownership could be due to the increase in physical activity as well as a decrease in loneliness and depression.

According to the study, more research is needed to confirm a causal relationship and offer recommendations about prescribing dogs for prevention.

**CBD** *continued from page 18*

### What are CBD's risks?

It's not regulated, so you have to do a little bit of homework. The federal government tested some CBD suppliers, and some didn't have CBD; some had THC. You have to make sure the CBD is from a safe supplier so you're not getting anything else like pesticides, heavy metals, etc.

CBD affects your metabolism in the same way as grapefruit juice. It competitively metabolizes liver enzymes, meaning it can increase the blood level of a couple of drugs. If you're on a blood thinner, you'd want to tell your doctor you're starting CBD, because they might want to check the level of the blood thinner more frequently.

You want to think in terms of comparing CBD with other products you would use for similar issues. Other medications have risks as well. So you're comparing it for pain with opiates or nonsteroidals, which cause kidney damage or ulcers, or for anxiety compared to antidepressants.

It is not free of risk or side effects, but compared to what you would be using otherwise, it has a pretty benign safety profile.

### Is it legal to obtain and use CBD?

Generally speaking, it's safe to purchase, but it's not 100 percent everywhere. Each state has a law stipulating what is legal about CBD. It is largely, but not completely, legal.

### What should you know about buying CBD?

Make sure you get it from a source that has independent, third-party laboratory testing so you know you're getting the CBD they're selling you and nothing else. Recently, Leafly analyzed nearly 50 CBD products. Among its findings, 51 percent delivered the CBD promised on their labels, 15 percent delivered more than 120 percent of what was advertised, and 11 percent had zero CBD.

*Brian Wallheimer is a freelance writer, specializing in science.*

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# 5 OVERLOOKED CRUISE PORTS



*History and beauty await visitors at these stops.*

**BY LYN METTLER**

*Riomaggiore, Italy*

Photo courtesy Princess Cruises

Deciding where to take your next cruise? Consider an itinerary that stops at one of these ports of call, which are often overlooked but well worth a visit.

**GIBRALTAR** The British territory of Gibraltar is known for its famous Rock – one of the Pillars of Hercules marking the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. South of Spain and 15 miles north of Morocco, Gibraltar is three miles from end to end. Take a cable car to the top of the Rock to see all the way to Africa. There, you can observe native tailless monkeys, visit a nature reserve, and venture through tunnels and an underground city built to protect it from German occupation. Princess Cruises' 7-Day Mediterranean Cruise and many other itineraries include a stop in Gibraltar.

**MANZANILLO, MEXICO** Manzanillo is an historic port on the Mexican Riviera, known for its 350 days of sunshine each year, relaxing beaches and golf clubs. The port is only 70 miles from La Campana, one of Mexico's famous pyramids, far from the tourist crowds that bombard better-known sites like Chichén Itzá. Visitors can see not only the pyramid but tombs, a ball court, various monuments and volcanoes in the distance.

**KANAZAWA, JAPAN** Kanazawa is the capital of Ishikawa Prefecture on Japan's central Honshu Island and a UNESCO City of Crafts and Folk Art. Visitors are "transported back in time in the Higashi Chaya area of beautifully maintained geisha houses and the Nagamachi Samurai District of

protected samurai houses," says Bruce Krumrine, vice president of shore excursions and Asia port operations for Princess Cruises. The company stops at this port on its 9-Day Sea of Japan cruise, as well as on longer excursions. Kanazawa is also home to the ethereal Kenroku-en Garden, considered one of the three best gardens in Japan.

**LIVORNO, ITALY** Some 200 miles north of Rome on Italy's west coast is the city of Livorno, which is a great gateway to Tuscany and the country's gorgeous Cinque Terre region. Depart the ship and make your way to cities such as Siena, Florence, Pisa, or even smaller towns like San Gimignano or Riomaggiore. Less than two hours away are famous sites like the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Brunelleschi's Dome in Florence, and the medieval architecture and rolling hills of Tuscany.

**ST. JOHN'S, CANADA** Discover Canada by boat to see its charming coastline, beautiful bays and abundant wildlife. St. John's is the capital of the island of Newfoundland and one of the oldest European settlements in the Americas. Bird lovers will enjoy the Bird Islands, where many marine birds stop in late spring and summer. Other sites include the historic Cape Spear Lighthouse, the 1855 Basilica of John the Baptist and the fishing village of Quidi Vidi.

*Lyn Mettler is a freelance travel writer who blogs at [GotoTravelGal.com](http://GotoTravelGal.com).*

**The National World War I Museum and Memorial** in Kansas City, Mo., is hosting "The Vietnam War: 1945-1975" through May. Admission is \$8 for active-duty military, veterans and seniors, and an additional \$3 to see the Vietnam War exhibit.

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# MYSTERIES OF THE MIND

## The Journey Inward

*Recent research shows how the ancient practice of transcendental meditation can help veterans confronting PTSD.*

BY JEFF STOFFER

**B**ob Ouellette was an explosive ordnance disposal specialist in the Army as terrorism tensions escalated in the post-Desert Storm era. His duties included investigating any unattended briefcase or container that might blow up in his face, killing him or others. He spent much of his service time in the Washington, D.C., area, but also traveled the world to protect the president and other top U.S. officials. In a three-week period during the Gulf War, he never knew when any one of the 73 suspect packages he personally inspected would invite death. Such pressure, he later discovered, had a way of rewiring his brain.

"That's an awful lot of calls, an awful lot of stress," says Ouellette, now a civilian security specialist for the Department of Defense.

"Every time you turn around, it's like, is this one for real? I don't like walking by trash cans. I don't like sitting with my back to the door. I don't like crowded situations. I exhibited all those signs of PTSD." He was never so diagnosed, but the effect was felt.

Acting on a mantra Ouellette learned in his training as a noncommissioned officer – "know yourself and seek self-improvement" – he was issued an altogether different mantra from an ancient practice, transcendental meditation (TM), about six years ago. It was a seemingly counter-intuitive approach for a veteran whose specialty required intense, high-stress precision and focus. "When I found TM, it just enabled me to relax. Creativity, workload – it seems you're able to handle more, do more. And it's not stressful."

Those who practice TM say the key to unlocking clear thought and function, no matter the situation, is to spend 20 minutes twice a day deliberately thinking about nothing, allowing the brain to essentially have a mind of its own.

"Transcendental meditation is a technique of the mind," explains Tony Nader, an MIT-educated brain scientist, doctor, author and international leader of the TM movement. "You sit quietly, in a chair. You close the eyes and allow the mind to take its natural tendency, which is to go toward more ... we are always searching for more in life. This is the nature of the mind. What we do is turn the mind inward and allow it to dive toward itself. The inner, deeper level of the self is something which is extremely soothing and calming. The source of intelligence, of creativity, of thought, is all within us. So diving back toward ourselves, the mind settles down."

Transcendental meditation, as a treatment for veterans diagnosed with PTSD, is not a New Age fad. "It has roots in the ancient noble warrior classes, where acting out of fear or anger brought disaster or defeat," writes TM instructor Bob Roth, author of the *New York Times* best-selling book "Strength in Stillness: The Power of Transcendental Meditation."





*Bob Ouellette takes time out from his work schedule to meditate. The effects on his stress level and performance have been “life-changing,” he says. Photo by Jeff Stoffer*

The *Lancet* interpreted the San Diego study by stating that transcendental meditation “might be a viable option for decreasing the severity of PTSD symptoms in veterans and represents an efficacious alternative for veterans who prefer not to receive or who do not respond to traditional exposure-based treatments of PTSD.”

A resolution passed at the 98th American Legion National Convention in 2016 called on Congress to fund collaborative DoD-VA research projects into innovative treatment programs for PTSD, particularly those that do not rely on prescription drugs. Further study and accessibility of alternative treatments has also been a consistent recommendation from The American Legion’s TBI-PTSD Committee for nearly a decade. So too has been the committee’s message that no two diagnoses are exactly alike, so treatment should be tailored for each individual’s set of conditions.

For veterans who experienced combat stress for extended periods, Nader explains, “what we are facing is a dramatic transformation in the wiring of the brains of these young service people.”

He says the nervous system “is divided, in a simplistic way, into two parts. There is what we can call the ‘new brain.’ And there is the more animal-instinct-oriented part of the brain, which is more the limbic system inside, deeper in the brain. The old brain, the lower brain, is what protects us from danger; that is most important. The brain is wired so that when you are in a stressful situation, a danger situation, it activates automatically these processes, so you can react quickly. The new brain takes time to analyze and react.”

In essence, the fight-or-flight chemistry of the brain becomes highly stimulated in combat or other stressful situations. “Our brain is wired to defend us from danger without having us to think about it,” Nader says. “You see something jumping at you – a tiger in the forest – you don’t have to think about it. This reaction is either you run away or you fight. Fight or flight. We are deeply wired like that – for the dangers of the jungle.”

For young people who have lived otherwise comfortable lives, the shift to extended life-or-death combat stress triggers changes that can be difficult to reverse. “In a combat situation, they are facing exactly the conditions of the jungle because their life is threatened, and they have to kill the threatening

A three-year DoD-funded study at the VA San Diego Healthcare System indicated that 61 percent of veterans in the program experienced clinically meaningful improvements in PTSD symptoms by using TM. The prestigious *Lancet Psychiatry* journal published the results in November 2018, a breakthrough in scientific validation for the practice. Researchers compared TM with prolonged exposure therapy and health education treatment, and news of its effectiveness was covered by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, NBC News and ABC News.

The clinical trials involved 203 veterans diagnosed with PTSD. One, a Navy veteran whose diagnosis was linked to military sexual trauma, was quoted about the transformation she experienced by participating in the study: “Through TM, I began to heal. I began to come out of my nightmares and face the battle ahead. I began to attend (treatment) sessions faithfully, I began to drive, and I started community college. I got the courage to apply for a job in a hospital. This program has given me my life back.”

Ouellette observed a similar outcome for a skeptical Air Force sergeant “who was always stressed out,” he says. “I told her, ‘You might benefit from this.’ She said, ‘My mind is always racing ... I can’t do this.’” She decided, despite her doubts, to give it a chance. “She said she was totally changed. It calmed her down. I got a thank-you note from her, for introducing her to it.”

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people. There is this very, very deep instinct that is awakened. So the wiring that takes care of this fight-or-flight response gets more and more enhanced. (It) becomes so powerful and so wired that when they come back to normal life, their wiring is different, and everything is now a potential threat. They are living in a constant threat situation – hyper arousal. You cannot just talk to these people and tell them to calm down.”

Transcendental meditation’s roots run 5,000 years deep, to the ancient Vedic tradition in India. The practice climbed in popularity in the 1960s when Nader’s predecessor, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, led the modern movement and gained a celebrity following, including members of the Beatles, the Beach Boys and the Rolling Stones.

“Some people think it’s hippie,” Ouellette says. “There are also people who have a built-in bias against something new. This isn’t new, as far as the world goes. It’s just different thinking.”

Meditation practices – including mindful awareness, which also has ancient Asian roots – have had a resurgence of interest as a subject for serious scientific inquiry. VA’s recent research, including clinical trials whose results were published in 2018 by the American Psychiatric Association, showed positive results for mindful-based stress reduction after more than 200 veterans with PTSD participated in an eight-week study. While mindfulness focuses on the present (rather than revisiting the past or worrying about the future) and concentration about a particular experience (like eating or exercise), TM is about letting the mind go where it will, the opposite of focus or deliberate thought. Though cautious about meditation practices as an answer for veterans with PTSD, especially those with serious mental health conditions, VA has given it serious study, generally coming away with enough evidence in clinical trials to continue pursuing it.

“As with all complementary and integrative health approaches, mindfulness-based meditation should be a supplement to, not a replacement for, trauma-focused behavioral psychotherapies,” the journal *Psychiatric Research & Clinical Practice* recommended. “Additional studies are needed.”

“We’ve had 500 or more research studies on the benefits (of TM),” Nader says. “For PTSD specifically, there is more and more rigorous research. It’s a growing body.”

Ouellette says he has seen more studies about TM than mindful awareness, but adds that when a veteran, regardless of a PTSD diagnosis, says he or she is “feeling terrible, is stressed out, is in a bad place ... thinking of doing something bad,” TM

should not be ruled out because of any stereotypes or cultural biases. Nader says nearly 12 million people worldwide now practice it, and such high-profile advocates as the David Lynch Foundation, as well as the Transcendental Meditation International website itself, have dedicated platforms that describe the benefits specifically for veterans.

Some skepticism is based on a perception that TM is a religious activity or has a specific spiritual or ideological bent. “To the contrary, we have found people becoming more understanding of their religion, more at peace with their god,” Nader says. “We used to say that if religion is to invite God to your home, TM can be like cleaning your home.”

Ouellette agrees. “You’re not changing how you think. You’re not changing politics. You can be a Republican. You can be a Democrat. You can be Catholic, Christian, Jewish, Hindu or Muslim – it doesn’t change you. You’re still who you are. Your mind is just in a better place. It doesn’t change you. It changes your physiology. It changes your mind. It changes how you deal with everything else.”

As commander of Vietnam Veterans Memorial American Legion Post 295 in Germantown, Md., Ouellette makes a point to reach out to veterans needing help with PTSD. On the post’s landing page is a platform titled “Resilience: Not All Wounds are Visible,” and VA’s national suicide prevention hotline is promoted, as are phone numbers for counseling. The site also has a variety of videos, testimonials and explanations of TM as a possible therapy solution.

Ouellette has recommended TM for his children, including his youngest son, an Army sergeant who deployed twice to Iraq and twice to Afghanistan. “It worked for him,” he says. “It’s life-changing.”

TM works in part, Nader adds, because it offers for veterans who have endured hyper arousal what any doctor would prescribe after a surgery or illness: rest. “We are teaching them a simple technique that allows them to not do anything, to allow the mind to go back to itself, and then the mind heals itself – the body heals itself. What we are doing is giving it a chance to do that. The experience of transcending, of going deeper, gives that inner experience of peace and quietness.” 🌿

Jeff Stoffer is editor of The American Legion Magazine.

Learn more about transcendental meditation and veterans who have been helped by the practice:

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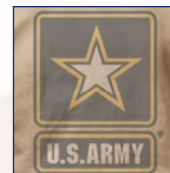
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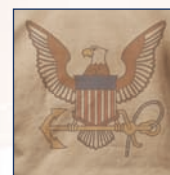


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*Lt. j.g. Darrow Mead of the guided missile destroyer USS Carney (DDG 64) clears a corner during a search-and-seizure drill aboard a Bulgarian ship during the maritime exercise Sea Breeze 2019. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Fred Gray IV*

# WORTH THE COST

*Alliances enhance America's power and security.*

BY ALAN W. DOWD

**“T**here is only one thing worse than fighting with allies,” Winston Churchill observed, “and that is fighting without them.”

After standing alone against Adolf Hitler – and then enduring the headaches and heartaches of North Africa, Normandy and NATO’s early years – Churchill understood the benefits and burdens of alliances.

U.S. leaders can relate to the British prime minister’s observation. Alliance maintenance is an

endless, thankless exercise in cajoling, coaxing and compromising. But it’s better than the alternative: not having any allies.

They may be fickle. They may require more attention than expected. They may not contribute their share to the common defense, as President Trump points out. But with the Middle East on fire, Russia on the march and China on the rise, America’s allies are more important today than at any time since the beginning of the Cold War.

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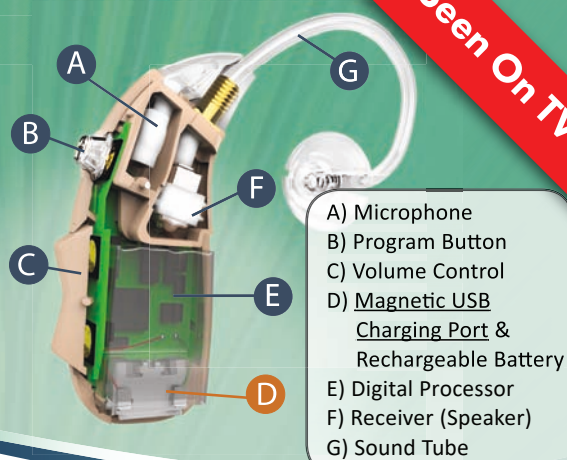
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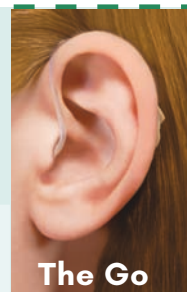
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## There's a reason the United States shoulders a bigger share of the burden of alliance operations: it's, well, bigger.

**'A COMMON STRUGGLE'** America's wariness of alliances is part of its DNA.

"It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world," President George Washington explained, cautioning against "foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues." President Thomas Jefferson echoed Washington by calling for "peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none."

Heeding their advice, President Woodrow Wilson insisted that the United States maintain its independence as an "associated" power during World War I, bluntly declaring, "We have no allies."

Given those historical markers, U.S. alliance-building efforts during the Cold War seem to be a dramatic departure from Washington's counsel. As President John Kennedy observed, "We put ourselves, by our own will and by necessity, into defensive alliances with countries all around the globe" – NATO, SEATO, ANZUS, the Rio Pact, bilateral treaties with Japan, the Philippines and South Korea.

Yet America's participation in alliances predates the Cold War. In January 1942, just weeks after Pearl Harbor, the United States organized a 26-nation alliance to wage "a common struggle" against the Axis powers.

U.S. involvement in alliances even predates World War II. In fact, America pursued alliances from the very beginning. We seem to forget that Benjamin Franklin traveled to Paris in 1776 to negotiate – and ultimately secure – an alliance with France. Between 1778 and 1782, as a State Department history details, France "provided supplies, arms and ammunition ... troops and naval support ... transported reinforcements, fought off a British fleet, and protected Washington's forces in Virginia." While serving as ambassador to France, Jefferson proposed a U.S.-European "confederation" to fight piracy.

In short, there has always been tension between America's desire for independence and recognition of the benefits of alliances. But the notion that we avoided alliances until the Cold War is a myth.

**A LARGER LOAD** What's not a myth is that America tends to carry a larger load than its allies. This has been true for many decades.

During the Korean War, the United States accounted for 88 percent of non-ROK combat forces. In Operation Desert Storm, the United States contributed 80 percent of the combat aircraft and 72 percent of forces deployed. At the peak of coalition operations in Afghanistan, the United States accounted for 71 percent of forces deployed. In the initial phases of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the United States accounted for some 80 percent of forces deployed in the Central Command region. At the height of anti-ISIS operations, the United States accounted for 68 percent of the coalition's kinetic strikes.

The U.S. share of NATO defense spending is 70 percent today.

There's a reason the United States shoulders a bigger share of the burden of alliance operations: it's, well, bigger. The United States has a GDP of \$20.5 trillion, a population of 327 million and, owing to its victories in World War II and the Cold War, interests and bases around the world.

By comparison, Japan's GDP is \$5.4 trillion, population 126 million; Germany's GDP is \$4.1 trillion, population 83 million; Britain's GDP is \$2.9 trillion, population 65 million; France's GDP is \$2.8 trillion, population 67 million; Italy's GDP is \$2.3 trillion, population 62 million; South Korea's GDP is \$2 trillion, population 51 million; Canada's GDP is \$1.7 trillion, population 35 million; and Australia's GDP is \$1.2 trillion, population 23 million.

None of these nations has the resources of the United States. And owing to their exhaustion or defeat during World War II, none has the reach of the United States. Yet many of them really do "punch above their weight," as President Barack Obama often said.

Some three dozen nations contributed troops to the Sisyphean mission in Afghanistan. They made real sacrifices: 455 Brits, 158 Canadians, 86 French, 54 Germans, 48 Italians, 43 Danes, 41 Australians, 40 Poles and 29 Georgians have died in Afghanistan. These numbers pale in comparison to the price our Afghan allies have paid: 20,729 Afghan security forces were killed between 2001 and 2015; 28,529 between 2015 and 2018.

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## “If we didn’t have NATO today, we’d need to create it,” Gen. James Mattis contends.

Afghan losses would be proportionally equivalent to more than 400,000 Americans. The United States has lost 2,438 troops in Afghanistan. More than 100,000 Brits, 20,000 South Koreans, 13,900 Poles and 6,100 Japanese cycled through Iraq during Iraqi Freedom. Again, they made real contributions and heavy sacrifices: 1,952 coalition troops were wounded and 322 were killed.

Thirty nations have contributed troops to the anti-ISIS campaign. Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Jordan and the Netherlands joined the United States in conducting airstrikes in both Iraq and Syria. Australia, Britain, Denmark and France deployed commandoes for kinetic operations. Germany trained Iraqi troops. Turkey conducted airstrikes and allowed its bases to be used. The French aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle* served as a command center during the operation. After Bashar Assad’s chemical attacks in 2018, Britain and France joined the United States in conducting punitive strikes against his regime.

To be sure, some allies could be more helpful or less exasperating: Germany could spend more on defense, Tokyo and Seoul could settle a century-old dispute over the policies of Imperial Japan, Turkey could stop buying Russian weapons and start behaving like a democracy, and Canada could join allied missile-defense efforts. But given the economic and demographic disparities between the United States and its allies, expecting them to contribute as much as America to the common defense seems unreasonable.

**RENEWED COOPERATION** At the height of the Cold War, the United States accounted for 56 percent of NATO’s defense spending, the rest of the alliance 44 percent – far more balanced than today’s 70-30 split. That explains why Trump, Obama and their defense secretaries have spent the past decade calling on NATO allies to contribute more to the common defense.

The message is getting through. Reawakened to the Russian threat, 26 NATO members increased defense spending in 2018. By the end of 2020, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg reports, NATO’s European and Canadian members will add \$100 billion extra toward defense. By 2024, two-thirds of the alliance will meet NATO’s standard of investing 2 percent of GDP in defense.

Wary of China, America’s Pacific partners are moving in a similar direction. Japan has increased defense spending eight years in a row. Japan is increasing its East China Sea troop strength by 20 percent; upconverting its “helicopter carriers” into flattops capable of deploying fixed-wing F-35Bs; and investing \$8.7 billion to underwrite basing U.S. troops on Japanese territory.

South Korea spends \$924 million annually to support America’s presence. Seoul shouldered 90 percent of the costs for a new U.S. base, and plans to increase defense spending by an average of 7.1 percent annually between 2020 and 2024.

Australia is increasing defense spending 81 percent between 2016 and 2025, doubling its submarine fleet, procuring 72 F-35As, and hosting thousands of U.S. Marines.

This newfound commitment to the common defense is posturing the West to respond to Russian, Chinese and Iranian aggression.

NATO’s European members have added 109,000 troops since 2015. Germany, Britain and Canada are spearheading NATO’s forward-deployed battle groups in the Baltics. At U.S. urging, NATO recently approved the “Four 30s Plan,” under which NATO allies will have 30 troop battalions, 30 squadrons of strike aircraft and 30 warships ready within 30 days of a go-order.

Britain is standing up two Littoral Strike Groups – one in the Indo-Pacific, the other in the Mediterranean-Atlantic.

The U.S. and German armies recently signed a “strategic vision statement” that will lead to “an unprecedented level of interoperability,” according to *Defense News*, with German brigades deploying under operational control of U.S. Army division headquarters.

Japan, Australia, Britain and France have joined the United States in enforcing freedom of navigation in and above the South China Sea. Canada and France sent warships through the Taiwan Strait in 2019, joining the U.S. Navy in signaling Beijing that it cannot cordon off international waterways.

Britain, Australia, Albania, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE have joined the United States in a mission to protect the Persian Gulf against Iranian piracy. South Korea is deploying an anti-piracy unit to assist.

NATO members are bolstering U.S. efforts to



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## Alliances are neither a drain on America's treasury nor a chain dragging America into war.

project stability far beyond the Euro-Atlantic region: it recently launched a 600-man mission to provide sustained training to the Iraqi army. NATO is coordinating with Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea “to address the rise of China,” Stoltenberg reports. In response to Russia, NATO is increasing its interest and presence in the Arctic.

Plus, NATO serves as the core of the Proliferation Security Initiative (a coalition committed to interdicting WMDs and WMD delivery systems on the high seas) and Combined Maritime Forces (a 33-nation partnership focused on counterterrorism, counterpiracy and security in the Persian Gulf).

“If we didn’t have NATO today, we’d need to create it,” Gen. James Mattis contends. “NATO is vital to our interests.”

**INSURANCE** Indeed, all these allied contributions help secure U.S. interests – the most important of which is preventing great-power war.

NATO and America’s bilateral alliances in the Indo-Pacific are, for lack of a better term, insurance policies. For Europe, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Australia and the Philippines, defense treaties with the United States serve as insurance against invasion. Without that insurance, there’s no security, as history has a way of reminding those on the outside looking in – from Cold War Hungary to post-Cold War Ukraine.

For the United States, these treaties insure against another Korean conflict, European crisis or surprise in the Pacific triggering another war that would inevitably draw it in.

Like all insurance policies, there are costs associated with alliances. U.S. defense expenditures earmarked for Europe amount to \$36 billion per year. That’s a lot of money. But consider what we get in exchange for that insurance premium: a Europe not at war with itself, reinforced against invasion and free from any hostile force; bases that enable the United States to project power; and the vast trade and economic benefits that flow from these realities. (U.S. trade with NATO allies tops \$1.6 trillion annually, with Japan, Korea, Australia and the Philippines \$508 billion annually.)

Moreover, compare the costs of defending Europe with the costs of liberating it. A \$36 billion investment in trans-Atlantic security equals less than 0.2 percent of U.S. GDP. During World War I,

by comparison, the United States spent an average of 16.1 percent of GDP on defense – and sacrificed 116,516 lives. During World War II, it spent an average of 27 percent of GDP on defense – and sacrificed 405,399 lives.

These alliances are neither a drain on America’s treasury nor a chain dragging America into war. In fact, by deterring hostile regimes, serving as bridges to global hot spots, creating lines of defense beyond America’s shores, building confidence between old enemies, buttressing a liberal international order that sustains the American way of life, and generating sources of material and diplomatic support for American leadership, these alliances have enhanced America’s power and security.

“Our strength as a nation is inextricably linked to the strength of our unique and comprehensive system of alliances,” Mattis explains. “While the United States remains the indispensable nation in the free world, we cannot protect our interests or serve that role effectively without maintaining strong alliances.”

The “myth is that our allies are making us poor by free-riding on our military expenditures,” Gen. William Odom, former director of the National Security Agency, argued in 2008. “How are we to explain that the United States has gotten richer than its allies? ... Our military alliances, by lowering transaction costs, have facilitated the vast increases in international trade from which the United States profits enormously. Our military costs should be seen as investments that pay us back.”

“There is no hope for the United States to sustain its role as the world’s sole superpower without the Europeans as allies,” several former NATO commanders add.

The generals recognize something that many Americans overlook: protecting the homeland, promoting U.S. interests, preserving some semblance of order, preventing great-power war. These missions depend on infrastructure in places like Lakenheath, Fairford, Ramstein, Thule, Aviano, Yokosuka, Osan, Pyeongtaek, Diego Garcia and Manama.

Having access to that infrastructure depends on having allies – headaches, heartaches and all. 🌿

*Alan W. Dowd is a senior fellow with the Sagamore Institute Center for America’s Purpose.*

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Bates led to a state  
historical marker  
commemorating the  
achievements of  
World War I veteran  
Joseph Ward.

Photo by Matt Grills

# DOCTOR, SURGEON, SOLDIER

*At the height of the Jim Crow era, Joseph Ward blazed trails for black Americans.*

BY LEON E. BATES

**G**enealogists say the most important thing on a headstone is the dash between the date of birth and date of death, for that dash represents the life lived.

At the top of a gentle rise in Indianapolis' 550-acre Crown Hill Cemetery is the final resting place of Lt. Col. Joseph H. Ward (1872-1956), an African American surgeon, hospital administrator and World War I veteran. Like most military markers, Ward's offers few clues to his dash – his many accomplishments, in and out of uniform.

I first came across Ward's name while doing research before returning to college, and came to appreciate his legacy while doing additional dissertation research. I learned that Ward established and operated a hospital for black patients when they were barred from treatment elsewhere. Digging further, I discovered he was a medical trailblazer and early American Legion member whose achievements – decades before the civil-rights movement – have been largely forgotten.



*Maj. Joseph Ward aboard SS La France in February 1919*

Photo courtesy Department of Veterans Affairs

**EARLY YEARS** Ward was a first-generation freedman, born near Wilson, N.C., on the same plantation where his mother, Mittie, grew up enslaved. His maternal grandfather, David G. Ward, a physician, owned the plantation. However, his grandfather took no interest in young Joseph or his education.

As a teenager, Ward left North Carolina and lived in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., area before settling in Indianapolis. There, he lived with and worked for Dr. George Hasty, one of the founders of the Physio-Medical

College of Indiana and editor of the *Physio-Medical Journal*. Hasty saw to it that Ward completed his education – eighth grade, followed by three years at Indianapolis High School (later Shortridge High School, class of 1894) and the Physio-Medical College of Indiana in 1897. Ward did additional training at the Indiana Medical College in 1900. In 1902, he attended advanced training in modern surgical techniques at Polhemus Memorial Clinic in New York, which pioneered the use of inhalation anesthetics.



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*The executive staff of Veterans Hospital No. 91 in Tuskegee, Ala., assembles for a photo in 1933. Joseph Ward, chief medical officer and administrator, is in the center of the front row. The facility was later renamed Tuskegee VA Hospital.* Photo courtesy Department of Veterans Affairs

Ward wanted to be not only a doctor, but a surgeon – goals made practically impossible by 19th-century social norms and segregation policies of the Indianapolis City Hospital. In 1901, he opened a small office at 435½ Indiana Ave., where he was one of eight African American doctors in Indianapolis – a city with a black population of 169,000. Undaunted, he went on to open Ward’s Sanitarium, a privately owned hospital and surgery center located on the second floor of a large house at 722 Indiana Ave., offering medical services to anyone.

In 1908, Ward was elected president of the Aesculapian Medical Society, the Indianapolis chapter of the National Medical Association. He also served as vice president of the National Hospital Association, a group for black-owned hospitals (a counterpart to the American Hospital Association). By 1922, African Americans in Indiana needing surgery were coming from as far as 100 miles away.

**THE WAR YEARS** On April 6, 1917, at the request of President Wilson, Congress declared war against Germany. Not long after, the U.S. government called on African Americans to join the cause, on the heels of Wilson’s public praise of D.W. Griffith’s racist film “Birth of a Nation,” which had played to sellout crowds. Some 350,000 blacks served, 10,000 of whom never returned home; most are buried in U.S. military cemeteries in France.

Ward joined the Army, intending to serve as a doctor. He was already a respected surgeon, proprietor of a successful private hospital, with a wife and two children. At 45, and with no military experience, Ward was under no obligation to serve, yet in an interview with the *Washington Bee* he said that something important was happening in the world and he wanted to be a part of it.

At the Medical Officers Training Camp (Colored) at Fort Des Moines, Iowa (a one-time experiment the Army never repeated), Ward’s skills as a physician and administrator got the training staff’s attention, and he was recommended for promotion.

As one of the 104 black doctors and dentists who served in the Army during World War I, Ward was assigned to the 325th Signal Battalion, 92nd Infantry Division. On June 10, 1918, 1st Lt. Joseph H. Ward, M.D., along with members of a medical detachment of the 325th Field Signal Battalion and 3,000 men of the 92nd, departed for Europe at Hoboken, N.J., aboard USS *Orizaba*, a U.S.-flagged ocean liner requisitioned by the Army.

Being a medical officer in a combat zone can, at times, be as hazardous as serving as an infantryman, as Ward and other members of MOTC (Colored) learned with the death of 1st Lt. Urbane Bass of Virginia. Bass was among the group of black doctors and dentists commissioned at Camp Des Moines, and was assigned to the 372nd Infantry Regiment, 93rd Infantry Division.

On Oct. 6, 1918, Bass was treating wounded soldiers at a dressing station near Montheois, France, when a shell exploded near him, showering him with shrapnel and severing both legs. Bass died from shock and blood loss before he could be evacuated, and was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism. He was the first black commissioned officer to be buried in Fredericksburg National Cemetery.

By war’s end, Ward had been promoted to major and was in command of a U.S. Army field hospital in Europe. At the time, he was the first of two African Americans in Army history to achieve that level of authority and responsibility.

Ward returned to the United States aboard SS *La France*, arriving in New York City on Feb. 9, 1919. He went by train 60 miles east to Camp Upton, where he was held over to help care for returning veterans still recovering from illness and battlefield injuries.

While there, Ward received word that his most famous patient and America’s first female millionaire, Madam C.J. Walker, had fallen critically ill while visiting St. Louis. Ward and his wife were close friends with Walker; the couple helped launch the Walker Manufacturing Co. in 1911.





The Army granted Ward emergency leave, and he arrived in Irvington, N.Y., to meet Walker's train and accompany her home. Just after 7 a.m. May 25, 1919, Ward came down from Walker's bedroom and announced her passing. Following her funeral, Ward continued working at Camp Upton for a short time, then returned to Indianapolis in June 1919 after completing more than two years in uniform. He remained in the Army Reserve and cultivated connections made during his military service, seeds that would blossom into a government career.

In Indianapolis, Ward rebuilt his medical/surgical practice and adjusted to civilian life. He and his wife, Zella, also grappled with the loss of their son, 9-year-old Joseph Jr., who died during the 1918 flu pandemic.

**NEW ASSIGNMENT** In 1924, Ward was appointed chief medical officer and administrator of the segregated Veterans Hospital No. 91, a 600-bed facility built to accommodate black veterans of the Great War (later renamed Tuskegee VA Hospital). Larger than most U.S. hospitals and with an annual payroll of \$1 million, it rivaled white institutions.

Ward's appointment was not without controversy. The Harding and Coolidge administrations had resisted appointing any African American to the staff, let alone leadership. In 1929, the *Journal of the National Medical Association* published an article about the hospital and Ward's performance, reporting that all was well there even among those who had initially opposed the hospital and its staffing. Unfortunately, the perceived tranquility after Ward's appointment was a façade.

White residents of Macon County, Ala., and some government officials resented having an African American in such a high-profile position. A well-dressed Ward was often seen riding his horse around the expansive 450-acre hospital grounds, to Tuskegee University and throughout the town.

The situation was intolerable to local whites who opposed having the new veterans hospital staffed and led by African Americans. Given free rein, Ward recruited several physicians with whom he had trained and served in the Army. He appointed black dentists, a black head nurse and a black head dietitian, all of whom employed black subordinates. The dietitian purchased vegetables and meats from local black farmers first, paying them market rate and further irritating local whites. Soon senators and representatives suggested to Ward that he stop doing business with the black farmers, but he continued.

Coupled with a modern, well-operated hospital facility, Ward's professionalism and leadership style

were more than some could stand. Accusations began to swirl about poor management practices and wasting of government funds.

By 1936, some in the federal government had become annoyed with Ward, the staff and the entire concept of the Tuskegee Veterans Hospital, though it had passed all inspections and records checks without problems.

Writing for *The Crisis*, surgeon and civil-rights activist Dr. Louis T. Wright said, "I am told that this hospital has been rated since it was first established as one of the best-managed Veterans Hospitals in the country, both administration and in the character of scientific work done."

Dr. Joseph Garland of Massachusetts General Hospital called Tuskegee Veterans Hospital "one of the best conducted. The two hospitals at Tuskegee probably comprise the most fertile field for clinical material that the Negro race possesses." Patients were well cared for and registered no complaints.

Ward returned to Indianapolis in 1936 but was never able to return his sanitarium to its former level of prominence. Indianapolis had moved on; Ward's Sanitarium was no longer the only viable option for the African American community. The Indianapolis City Hospital was beginning to desegregate and allow black doctors to practice medicine there. The costs of equipping a surgery facility had escalated, too.

Ward practiced medicine for another 15 years until his retirement. He died Dec. 12, 1956, at the West 10th Street Veterans Hospital (now Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center), following a stroke. He was buried next to his wife and son.

During his lifetime, this first-generation freedman became a successful physician, surgeon, entrepreneur, Army officer, hospital administrator, civic leader, and prominent member and commander of American Legion Post 107 in Indianapolis, all during the height of the Jim Crow era (1896-1954), between *Plessy vs. Ferguson* and *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

In August 2019, the state of Indiana dedicated a historical marker at the former site of Ward's Sanitarium commemorating his achievements. The marker's installation and dedication would not have been possible without the emotional, financial and physical support of Broad Ripple American Legion Post 3 and Tillman H. Harpole American Legion Post 249, and members of the 11th District of Indiana. 🌿

*Leon E. Bates is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Wayne State University in Detroit. He is an Army veteran and member of Broad Ripple American Legion Post 3 in Indianapolis.*



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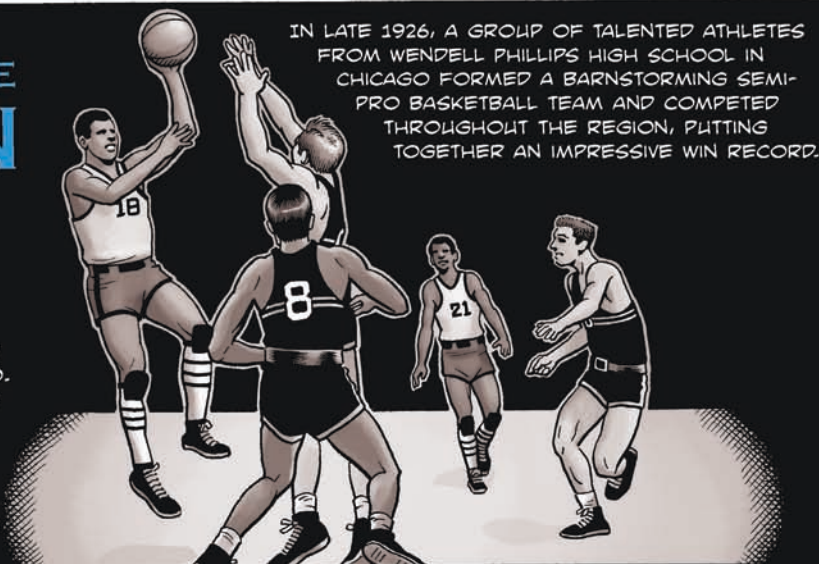
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Display actual size is 10 3/4" H x 6 1/4" W; sculptural B-17 wingspan is 12 1/2" W. Display made in China. Lighters ship unfilled; lighter fluid not included.

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- Genuine Zippo® windproof lighters emblazoned with imagery inspired by WWII aircraft in flight and vintage nose cone art
- Custom-designed display—a \$100 value—features a hand-painted, sculptural B-17 bomber with an impressive 12 1/2" wingspan
- Lighters are officially licensed, lifetime guaranteed by Zippo Manufacturing Company and proudly made in USA

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*Greatest Aircraft of World War II* is limited to only 8,000 complete collections. Order these fine limited editions, including the display, at \$39.99\* each. You'll receive one edition about every other month and you can cancel at any time by notifying us. Send no money now. Just return the coupon today.



PREMIERE EDITION,  
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Distinctive bottom stamp authenticates this collectible as a genuine Zippo® windproof lighter.

[bradfordexchange.com/904939](http://bradfordexchange.com/904939)

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National Archives



U.S. Navy



U.S. Navy

# IWO JIMA AT 75

U.S. Marines invaded Iwo Jima on Feb. 19, 1945, after months of naval and air bombardment. Japanese defenders were dug into bunkers deep within the island's volcanic rocks. Approximately 70,000 U.S. Marines and 18,000 Japanese soldiers took part in the battle. In 36 days of fighting, nearly 7,000 Marines were killed. Another 20,000 were wounded. Marines captured 216 Japanese soldiers; the rest were killed in action. The island was declared secured March 16, 1945. The battle ranks among the bloodiest in Marine Corps history.

After the battle, Iwo Jima served as an emergency landing site for more than 2,200 B-29 bombers, saving the lives of 24,000 U.S. airmen. Securing Iwo Jima prepared the way for the last and largest battle in the Pacific: the invasion of Okinawa.

Twenty-seven Medals of Honor were awarded for action on Iwo Jima – more than any other battle in U.S. history.

Source: National WWII Museum



U.S. Marine Corps



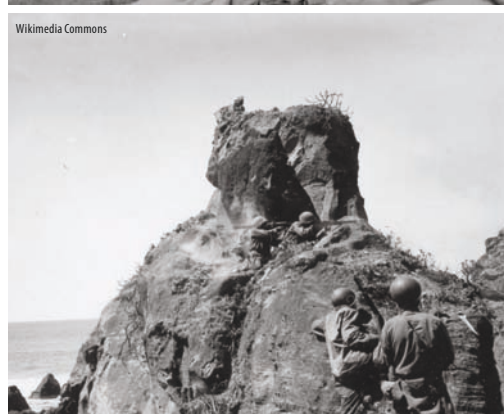
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The Zinger Chair is a personal electric vehicle and is not a medical device nor a wheelchair. Zinger is not intended for medical purposes to provide mobility to persons restricted to a sitting position. It is not covered by Medicare nor Medicaid.

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## MEMBERSHIP

## Male spouses begin joining Auxiliary

When given the opportunity to join the American Legion Auxiliary, Amedeo Lauria moved quickly.

"The Auxiliary has supported us for over 100 years," says Lauria, an Army veteran, 20-year American Legion member and former department service officer in Maine. "I felt it was only right, when given the opportunity, to join. It also pays honor to my wife, Susan, a Legionnaire, who served her country honorably in the U.S. Army and Army Reserve."

Last year, The American Legion updated its constitution, allowing male spouses to join the Auxiliary effective Sept. 1. Lauria signed up that day, and has been active in the Auxiliary unit attached to Post 135 in Sabattus, Maine. He represented both organizations during a Purple Heart ceremony last fall, providing photographic support of a former Auxiliary president's donation and more.

"Being a member of the Auxiliary opens up more opportunities to assist veterans in Maine and across the country," Lauria says. "I am always ready to provide support when called upon by the Auxiliary. I know they are there for



*Amedeo Lauria receives his membership pins from Michelle McRae, secretary for the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Maine.*

Photo courtesy Amedeo Lauria

our American Legion events as well. We are one focused team."

In the first three months following the eligibility change, more than 350 male spouses joined the Auxiliary, including two Paid Up For Life members. New units, which require 10 members, have also been formed.

Unit 57 in Newberg, Ore., counts two men among its charter members. Post 57 Adjutant Michael Speer gained his Auxiliary membership through the military service of his wife, Dana, unit president. Dana was an Army nurse during the Vietnam era, while Michael served in the Coast Guard.

"When Dana, the post service officer, was the driving force to organize the Auxiliary and ended up being unit president,

I wanted to support her," Michael says. "Initially, there was a concern about whether we could get 10 people to sign up. We ended up with 14."

While waiting to receive their unit's charter, the Speers and other Auxiliary members have been busy serving their community, assisting with a county stand-down last fall and organizing the post's Christmas party.

— Henry Howard



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## EDUCATION

## Purdue University program empowers women veterans



*Purdue University's Focus Forward Fellowship is designed to build skills, leadership and a sense of community among women student veterans.*

Photo courtesy Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University

Diane Darling earned her master's degree in higher education at Arizona State University but received her biggest career boost from an opportunity on another campus 1,700 miles away.

A program for women veterans, the Focus Forward Fellowship at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., is part of the university's Military Families and Research Institute (MFRI). It starts with a weeklong session and continues with a year-long

distance program. Students such as Darling learn basic job-search skills, receive guidance from a series of mentors, and are paired with a coach already working in their chosen field of study.

"The fellowship serves as a space to find community," says Darling, who left the Air Force as a senior airman in 2014. "Women are a minority among military and veterans groups, and veterans themselves are a minority. I had a small community of women veterans I was involved with prior to the fellowship. Now I feel like I know a lot of people who can identify with my experiences."

Funded by grants, MFRI conducts research on veterans and military issues, and has recently expanded its work to include overseeing programs that assist transitioning servicemembers and veterans.

"We've continued to have a research mission, but as our funding has come more from philanthropic sources, we've taken on more engagement and outreach responsibilities," says Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, who co-founded MFRI in 2000 and still serves as director. "I think of us as trying not only to generate important new knowledge about servicemembers, veterans and their families, but also to try to put to work (that) knowledge ... to find ways to make it easier for servicemembers, veterans and their families to get the support they need."

Darling is one of the fellowship's success stories. MFRI played a key role when she began applying for jobs, and her eventual promotion to the University of Arizona's assistant director for graduate global recruiting.

"Frankly, it was a reach," Darling says of the first position she sought. "I don't think I would have had the confidence to even submit my application if I had not done the fellowship. The whole time I was sitting there with these women learning about best practices and how to maneuver civilian life, I felt like I was waiting for the starting pistol to go off. I was racing toward the rest of my life."

Darling continues to be active with MFRI, twice serving as a mentor for fellowship participants.

"I will do anything to stay a part of this program," she says. "It was the most amazing experience to come back and work with these fellows in that capacity. As a coaching mentor, I have a small group of women I work with. I get to participate with them in their lives by serving as someone who they can turn to for professional or personal advice."

— Henry Howard

Learn more about the Focus Forward Fellowship and read an interview with MacDermid Wadsworth at [legion.org/magazine](https://legion.org/magazine).

## EDUCATION

## Monthly housing allowances for newly discharged



**Q:** *I've been out of the military for three months, but I won't be discharged until Dec. 31, 2019. I've been working at VA*

*since I was released from the military and have applied for On-the-Job Training (OJT) using my Chapter 33 benefits. VA sent me a letter stating that I was approved for the program, but I haven't received any basic housing allowance (BAH). I thought once I started working, I would receive a monthly housing allowance.*

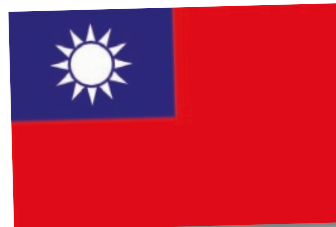
**A:** Since you have not been fully discharged from the military, you will not receive your monthly housing allowance until after Dec. 31. Once VA receives confirmation that you are fully discharged, your BAH will start. You must provide your DD 214. VA always pays in arrears, so your January check will come in February.

*Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz. [askvalerie@legion.org](mailto:askvalerie@legion.org)*

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## Taiwan boosts defense budget

Taiwan has "unveiled its largest defense spending increase in more than a decade," Reuters reports. The 8.3 percent increase in military spending is needed "to react to the enemy's threat and to ensure national security," according to Taiwan's defense ministry.



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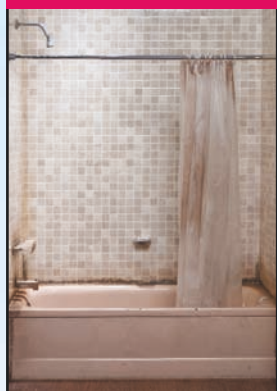


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## NATIONAL CONVENTION

## Where to stay in Louisville

Here is the list of department hotel assignments for the 102nd National Convention in Louisville, Ky., in August. **Ask your department adjutant about accommodations.**

## THE BROWN

335 W. Broadway

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American Legion National Headquarters

## FAIRFIELD INN &amp; SUITES DOWNTOWN

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## GALT HOUSE

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American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, American Legion National Headquarters

## HAMPTON INN DOWNTOWN

101 E. Jefferson St.

American Legion National Headquarters

## HYATT REGENCY

320 W. Jefferson St.

Arkansas, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Wisconsin

## MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN

280 W. Jefferson St.

Arizona, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia

## OMNI

400 S. 2nd St.

Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico

## SEELBACH HILTON

500 4th St.

Louisiana, Nebraska, Washington

## SPRINGHILL SUITES

132 E. Jefferson St.

Mississippi, Oregon

## CAREERS

## Reboot your job search in 2020



THE JOB FRONT  
BY WENDY S. ENELOW

In 2019, 7.1 million American jobs went unfilled, and that's projected to be the case through 2020. To take advantage of

those opportunities, reboot your job search to position yourself as a qualified applicant for the jobs you have targeted. Here's how:

■ **Update your résumé.** If you're currently working, update your résumé with highlights from last year: promotions, projects, achievements and more. If you're not working, look closely at job postings of the most interest to you, identify common qualifications and keywords, and make sure those skills are prominent in your résumé.

■ **Update your LinkedIn profile.** Add new and interesting information to your profile, as well as upgrade your "About You" section and job descriptions. Make your profile rich with keywords, since they are the foundation for LinkedIn searches by recruiters and hiring managers.

■ **Expand your contact network by at least 10 percent.** Reach out to new people, ask your contacts for names of others with whom you can connect, and join online conversations. The latter is a great way to meet new contacts, particularly LinkedIn groups where people with common interests share job postings and more.

■ **Expand your social media and online footprint.** LinkedIn is the primary online job-search platform, but other sites offer a wealth of job postings, job search tools and networking opportunities. Consider Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr to expand your online presence.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Modernize Your Résumé: Get Noticed ... Get Hired" and "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions."



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Joe Rosenthal via National Archives

## HONOR &amp; REMEMBRANCE

**'THEY ARE ALL HEROES'**

"The list of heroes immortalized in the iconic photo of the U.S. flag being raised over Iwo Jima has been revised again," NBC reports.

Thanks to the research of historians Stephen Foley, Dustin Spence and Brent Westemeyer, the Marine Corps has acknowledged that for 74 years, "it had misidentified one of the six fighting men who appeared in the Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph by Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal." As a result, Cpl. Harold Keller has replaced Pfc. Rene Gagnon as one of the flag-raisers in the famous photograph.

The historians used film footage taken on Mount Suribachi and photos taken by U.S. personnel to determine who was who – and where they were. "The findings ... were confirmed by a special investigative board convened by the Marines and by investigators from the FBI's Digital Evidence Laboratory," according to NBC.

This is the second change in three years to the list of names of Mount Suribachi flag-raising heroes. In 2016, a Marine Corps inquiry "concluded that Pfc. Harold Schultz was one of the six flag-raisers, not Navy hospital corpsman John Bradley."

"Regardless of who was in the photograph, each and every Marine who set foot on Iwo Jima, or supported the effort from the sea and air around the island is, and always will be, a part of our Corps' cherished history," a Marine Corps statement read. "In the words of General David H. Berger, Commandant of the Marine Corps, 'they are all heroes.'"

## MEMBERSHIP

**NEW POSTS**

**Post 5, Culebra, Puerto Rico** Chartered Dec. 11 (15 members)

**Daniel Ford Sr.-Longshoreman Post 533, Newark, N.J.** Chartered Dec. 10 (15 members)

**West Tallassee Post 1835, Tallassee, Ala.** Chartered Nov. 25 (15 members)

## ACTIVE DUTY

**Air Force sizes up pilot height regs**

To enlarge the pool of Air Force aviators, Air Force leaders are drawing attention to pilot height waivers. As *Air Force Magazine* reports, USAF rules currently stipulate that pilots must be between 5'4" and 6'5" when standing, and have a sitting height of 34 to 40 inches, disqualifying half of the nation's female population from becoming pilots. The height waivers offer new opportunities for that pool of potential aviators as well as other groups.

"We want to get the word out because we want to have more female aviators, we want to have more aviators from ... underrepresented groups, and we want to make sure that our Air Force looks like our nation to the max extent because we think that ... leads to a more combat-capable force," said 19th Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Craig Wills.

These waivers also aim to help pilots at the other end of the spectrum – those who are too tall, like Willis. "I was over the sitting height requirement, or was concerned that I would be, and so the night before I took my medical exam, I slept in a chair sitting upright, and I woke up early and ran three miles with my backpack full of rocks just to make sure that my spine would be nice and compressed before I got measured," he told *Air Force Magazine*. "So I'm very much interested in having a great waiver process."

The waivers aren't new, but the Air Force "is doing a better job of sizing up both its people and planes" and has approved 87 percent of 223 waiver requests made since 2015.

## HONOR &amp; REMEMBRANCE

**A national memorial for post-9/11 veterans**

Reps. Jason Crow, D-Colo., and Mike Gallagher, R-Wis., have introduced legislation identifying possible locations on the National Mall for a memorial honoring veterans of the global war on terrorism. As *Stars and Stripes* reports, President Trump approved the construction of a new memorial in 2017, "and the proposed legislation designates options of where to build it in Washington. The three possible locations place the new memorial near the Korean, Vietnam and World War II memorials."

Approximately 4.8 million veterans and 67,000 active-duty personnel have served in the global war on terrorism. An estimated 7,000 U.S. servicemembers have been killed and nearly 53,000 wounded.

U.S. Army



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## PERSONAL FINANCE



## Are you aligned?

### FOCUS ON FINANCES



J.J. MONTANARO

As part of USAA's Military Advocacy team, one of my responsibilities is to prepare our team to deliver financial readiness presentations to members.

A while back, I had the opportunity to listen to one of my teammates talk about "alignment." Alignment is critical in all areas of our lives. If you've ever driven a vehicle with an

alignment problem, you know what I mean.

Here are a few questions that could work as your own personal finance alignment test:

#### ■ Is your spending aligned with what's important to you?

Often, having a budget and budgeting is discussed as an end – something to have or do. In fact, carefully managing your income and expenses is a means to an end. What is it you are trying to accomplish? Maybe it's paying down debt, buying a home, creating a comfortable retirement or providing for your kids' education. Does what you're doing with your money align with what you're trying to accomplish? If the answer is no, it may be time to overhaul your spending (and savings) plan.

#### ■ Is your life insurance aligned with the reasons you have it?

One of the most common life insurance questions I get is, "What type of insurance should I buy?" While insurance policies – especially permanent ones (whole life, universal, etc.) – can be confusing, my answer isn't: Pick a policy providing coverage that aligns with the reason you're buying the life insurance. In other words, coverage associated with needs that go away with time (debt that's paid off, kids who become financially independent, retirement savings that are accumulated) is best covered with term insurance.

■ **Is your cash cushion aligned with your life?** As a financial planner, the mantra is to have three to six months of expenses set aside for emergencies. Life is different for different people, and that's where alignment comes in. A servicemember preparing for transition, or a dual-income military family where the non-military spouse's income is geographically vulnerable, could choose to have a lot more cash than the planning principle would dictate. On the other hand, someone with more stability or wealth could elect for a smaller stash of cash.

#### ■ Are your investments aligned with your goals' time horizons?

The mythical one-size-fits-all "right" investment or investment portfolio is illusive. Each has a different set of goals, time horizons, tax situations and risk tolerances. However, perhaps the biggest check you can make when evaluating your own savings and investments is ensuring a clear linkage between the investments you select and the time between now and when you'll need the money. The investments you select or portfolio you build for a savings goal two years out should look a lot different from those set aside for a goal 30 or 40 years into the future.

■ **Are you and your significant other aligned?** It's quite disheartening when a couple shares that one partner takes care of all the finances. It's hard to work together – spending, saving and aspiring – if you're not on the same page when it comes to your day-to-day and longer-term finances. Start talking about both.

*J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.*

[legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances](http://legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances)

### VERBATIM

**It might make you think twice. Should I put them away or should I be more active?**

**Duncan Stephenson**, Royal Society for Public Health deputy CEO, on a plan to introduce activity labels to food to help cut obesity rates in the United Kingdom. A chicken and bacon sandwich with 445 calories, for example, would require 42 minutes of slow running to burn those calories. Asked about the system, London resident Mike Kirkham said, "I suspect there are quite a lot of people who might find it easier to understand that than to understand the kind of stuff that's on labeling at the moment." Source: CBS News



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### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## Venezuela discovers cure for socialist woes

After nearly destroying the economy and the state with more than a decade of socialism and centralization, Venezuela's authoritarian government "has quietly and cautiously begun implementing free-market policies to tame hyperinflation and correct an economic contraction worse than America's Great Depression," *The Wall Street Journal* reports. The result: "a sliver of light to the moribund economy."

Caracas has "scaled back its once frenzied printing of money," "ended frequent salary hikes," "stopped enforcing the price controls that had led to dire food shortages," and allowed cash remittances from Venezuelans overseas to flow into the country. As a result, Venezuelans are receiving \$4 billion annually from relatives overseas. And inflation has fallen from 2.6 million percent in early 2019 to 135,000 percent by late 2019.

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Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine will publish a group's listing only once a year.**

Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

### Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org).

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life

memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

### AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

**485th Tact Msl Wing (Florennes AB, Belgium)**, Plymouth, MA, 6/18-21, Joe O'Brien, (508) 265-6619; **603rd AC&W Sqdn**, Pigeon Forge, TN, 5/6-9, Vaughn Alex Roberts, (727) 375-8955, [btb.varogers@gmail.com](mailto:btb.varogers@gmail.com)

### ARMY

**1st MP Co 1st Inf Div (Vietnam)**, Atlantic City, NJ, 9/13-15, William Gate, (908) 832-6423, [wegates@yahoo.com](mailto:wegates@yahoo.com); **8th Div 1st/87th Inf HHQ (Baumholder, Germany, 1969-1970)**, Engelwood, FL, 4/17-20, Jeffrey Boyles, (724) 889-3186, [jeffboyles1504@comcast.net](mailto:jeffboyles1504@comcast.net); **290th Armd Field Arty 2nd/28th Field Arty Bn (Fort Sill, OK & Bad Kissingen, Germany, 1958-1962)**, Lawton, OK, 7/9-11, Avery Hall, (580) 353-7635; **504th MP Bn**, Nashville, TN, 9/17-20, Tony Sills,

(770) 330-5236, [ctsills7147@bellsouth.net](mailto:ctsills7147@bellsouth.net); **OCS Alumni**, Columbus, GA, 5/2-4, Dan Johnson, (402) 981-1072, [vp-admin@ocsalumni.org](mailto:vp-admin@ocsalumni.org)

### COAST GUARD

**Bibb WPG 31**, St. Augustine, FL, 4/21-24, Lloyd Hensley, (865) 384-6254, [lhenlsey@yahoo.com](mailto:lhenlsey@yahoo.com)

### JOINT

**Udorn RTAFB (All Branches)**, Weatherford, TX, 7/9-13, Jerry Long, (817) 673-0459, [jclhydsr71bafb@gmail.com](mailto:jclhydsr71bafb@gmail.com)

### NAVY

**Ashland LSD 48**, Paducah, KY, 6/4-7, Robert Parrish, (217) 871-9706, [rep1933@yahoo.com](mailto:rep1933@yahoo.com); **Carpenter DD 825**, New Orleans, 5/14-18, Gary

Hogenmiller, (903) 360-7359, [garyclaudette@suddenlink.net](mailto:garyclaudette@suddenlink.net); **Cavalla SS/SSK/AGSS 244 & SSN 684**, Galveston, TX, 4/17-18, Mark Schrepferman, (858) 232-1640, [cavalla2020@gmail.com](mailto:cavalla2020@gmail.com); **CBMU 302**, Gettysburg, PA, 10/15-18, Tom Vandenberg, (509) 520-5396, [peggiev@pocketinet.com](mailto:peggiev@pocketinet.com); **Charles S. Sperry DD 697**, Albuquerque, NM, 4/30-5/3, Gary Chesser, (662) 323-5059, [dd697wm@bellsouth.net](mailto:dd697wm@bellsouth.net); **Cochrane DDG 21 Decommissioning Crew (1988-1991)**, Philadelphia, 7/30-8/1, James Haittsch, (267) 615-1737, [jmhaittsch@hotmail.com](mailto:jmhaittsch@hotmail.com); **Decatur DD 936 & DDG 31**, Chicago, 9/10-13, Art Scaccia, (815) 922-5650, [ajskasha@gmail.com](mailto:ajskasha@gmail.com); **Forrest B. Royal DD 872**, San Antonio, 6/25-28, Ron Larsen, (715) 423-8905, [mosbyushn@wctc.net](mailto:mosbyushn@wctc.net); **Lloyd Thomas DD/DDE 764**, Dayton, OH, 5/5-9, Scott Sheffer, (814) 797-5458, [lloydthomas@atlanticbb.net](mailto:lloydthomas@atlanticbb.net); **Muliphen AKA/LKA 61**, Jacksonville, FL,

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### LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

**Post 140, IA:** Don Bleil, Dale Murray  
**Post GR05, Germany:** Gail S. Halvorsen

### IN SEARCH OF

**14th Aerial Port Sqdn (Misawa AB, Japan, 1963-1965)**, Eddie Sellers, (208) 722-5964  
**570th MP Co (Frankfurt/West Berlin, Germany, 1962-1963)**, E. Parr, (732) 672-3120, pdplfd@optonline.net  
**763rd Trans Bn Railway Shop (Fort Eustis, VA, 1959-1962)**, Bill Johnston, (517) 974-2442, bjohngun@gmail.com  
**4713th Radar Eval Flt (ADC) (Griffiss AFB, NY, 1955-1957)**, Sam Mitchell, (740) 674-6161  
**6361st AB Sqdn 6361st Tact Sqdn (Iwo Jima, 1957)**, Don Sprankle, (330) 364-2725, sprankledon@gmail.com  
**6926th Sec Sqdn Mobile (Clark AB, Philippines, 1963-1965)**, Don Harrison, (303) 521-6129, acoustic@ecentral.com  
**A Co 4th Inf Div (Pleiku, Vietnam, 1967)**, Tom Lumley, sue\_sayre@yahoo.com  
**Army, Freedom Hill (Da Nang, Vietnam, 1969-1970)**, John Lauron, (281) 546-1222  
**C Btry 7th Bn 17th Arty (Pamgoji, South Korea, 1968-1969)**, Pedro "Rango" Rangel, 4911 Manor Stone Lane, Richmond, TX 77469  
**F Co 377th Inf 95th Div (1942-1945)**, Alfred Keith Muntz, 124 Prairie St., Greenfield, IL 62044  
**HQ & HQ Det 8th Log Cmd (Camp Darby, Livorno, Italy, 1964-1966)**, Anthony Bassano, (408) 295-1634, abassano@sbcglobal.net

**HQ & HQ Det 54th Med Grp (Fort Benning, GA, May-Aug 1955)**, Rheo Rozell, (717) 463-2108, mtmanedro@yahoo.com  
**MACV Stn Hosp Galley Crew (Da Nang, Vietnam, April 1967-Dec 1968)**, J.R. Hanson, 503 State Ave. North, Thief River Falls, MN 56701  
**XIX Mississippi Army Nat'l Guard OCS Class of 1977 (Camp Shelby, MS)**, Noel Mann, (601) 408-7436, nnameleon@gmail.com


### TAPS

**Harry L. Brown, Dept. of South Carolina.** Nat'l Cemetery Cmte. Memb. 2012-2015 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2005-2009.  
**Billy E. Dolin, Dept. of Massachusetts.** Nat'l Employment Cmte. Memb. 2010-2011, Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1991-1992, 1994-2010 and 2011-2013, and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Memb. 2013-2019.


**Norman Wheeler Patterson, Dept. of South Carolina.** Nat'l Emblem Sales Cmte. Memb. 1994-2014.

**Kenneth L. Powell Sr., Dept. of Florida.** Dept. Cmdr. 2001-2002, Nat'l American Legion Insurance Cmte. Memb. 2000-2009, Nat'l American Legion Insurance Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2009-2010, Nat'l American Legion Insurance Cmte. Chmn. 2010-2012, Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1999-2000 and Nat'l Revenue Enhancement Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2012-2013.

**Leroy Williams, Dept. of South Carolina.** Nat'l Cemetery Cmte. Memb. 2017-2019.



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"OK, then write him a letter asking him for the \$5,000 he owed you."

"But it's only \$500."

"Precisely. That's what he will reply and then you'll have your proof."

**WHY DO** they put bells on cows? Because their horns don't work.

**A PANHANDLER** asks a passerby, "How about a quarter, mister?"

"Don't you know panhandling is illegal here?" the man replies.

"I'm not panhandling. I'm practicing my hobby."

"And what is that?"

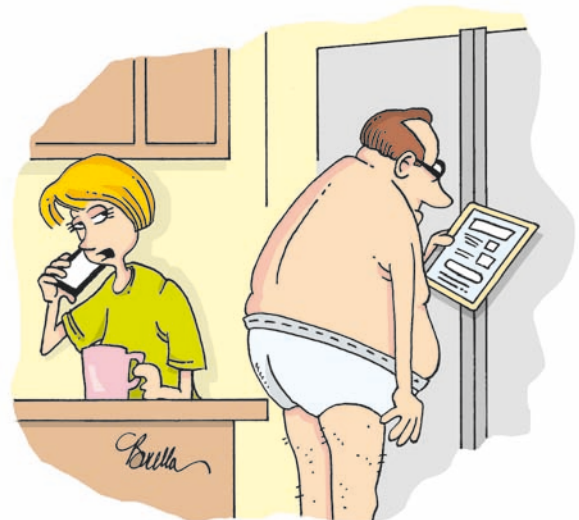
"Coin collecting."

**DID YOU HEAR** about the angry pancake? He just flipped.

**THE DIFFERENCE** between the short and long income-tax forms is simple. If you use the short form, the government gets your money. If you use the long form, your accountant gets your money.



"So, tell me about a time you fetched."



"I don't mind him working from home, except for Casual Fridays."

**WHY DID THE PIONEERS** cross the country in covered wagons? They didn't want to wait 40 years for a train.

**A PRINCE** enjoyed strolling through open-air markets, mingling with his subjects. One day he stopped at the stall of an old fishmonger and asked the price of the mackerel.

"Fifty pounds each," the woman replied.

"That's a lot of money. Are mackerel so hard to come by?"

"No, but princes are."

**WHY** is the person who invests your money called a broker?

**"WE'RE NEVER SATISFIED** when it comes to food. 'You know what'd be good on this burger? A ham sandwich. Instead of a bun, let's use two doughnuts. That way we can have it for breakfast.' Look out, McGriddle! Here comes the doughnut-ham-hamburger!" – *Jim Gaffigan*



"Maybe the laser pointer wasn't such a good idea."



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